

1192 THE M. 4. 1809
CREATVRES
PRAYSING
G O D:

O R,
THE RELIGION OF
dumbe Creatures.

An { Example and } For the stirring vp of our deuotion,
{ Argument, } and
For the confusion of Atheisme.

*Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino; laudate & super-
exaltate eum in secula.*

G. G.



L O N D O N,
Printed by FELIX KINSTON.
1 6 2 2.

1872. 10. 18





To the Reader.



Good Reader, The Authour himselfe not vouchsafing his name, title, or preface to this his worke, and very vnwilling that it should be publisht, I thought fit to let thee vnderstand, that the booke it selfe containes no paradox, notwithstanding the title: for the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, when they obey God, in their owne kinde, and follow their owne naturall course, this is it, which he calls *The Religion of dumbe Creatures*: and as it is frequent, and vsuall, to make comparisons in particular instances, so here in generall their seruice is compared to our Religion.

To commend the worke, seeing I am so farre ingaged, as that against the Authors will, it was my importunity to publish it, were in effect to commend mine owne iudgement, I will here onely acquaint you with the reasons that moued me;

First, to take away grosse Atheisme, which denies any God, he vseth no Sophistry, no perswasion, not the testimonies either of God, or of men, but herein craues aide of the dumbe Creatures, and in effect desires them to beare witnesse, who instantly acknowledge a God, and discouer many excellent, and admirable attributes in God, and this he calls their confession, or the naturall implicite faith of the Creatures, pag. 9.

Secondly, that this knowledge of God, which we learne from nature, is an imperfect knowledge, though otherwise, it was the sole knowledge of the ancient heathen Philosophers, he brands it with this imputation, that it is no more in effect then the religion of dumbe beasts; but as reason is aboue sence, so faith aboue reason: reason points out mysteries, faith discouers them; by vertue of which faith, we ioyne with the Angels in their seruice, as the dumbe beasts doe ioyne with vs in nature: and here he takes away all naturall objections against the mysteries of religion, beating downe mans curiosity, pag. 16.

Thirdly, how the Creatures praise God in their voices and sounds, which in effect are their prayers, in their naturall law, which is their decalogue; in all their qualities and affections, both naturall, and as they are sometimes meanes and conduit-pipes of grace, whereby nature is sanctified, pag. 23.

Fourthly, how all naturall Sciences may be reduced to Theology,

To the Reader.

suppose the Metaphysicks, naturall Philosophie, morall Philosophy, which are indeed the branches of naturall Theology, and are incorporated into the body of our diuinity. And hence you may as well exclude the morall law, the decalogue, and the whole state of nature, as to exclude humane learning; which shewing the perfections and excellencies of nature, doth therein shew the praise and commendations of the Maker: pag. 31.

Fifthly, this naturall religion not only comprehends in it selfe all naturall sciences, but it is further a supposed ground and foundation in all religions. Thus Iudaisme, Turisme, Gentilisme, as well as Christianity, acknowledge God in nature; though the Iudiciall, and Ceremoniall law began with *Moyes*, the Gospell with *Christ*, yet the naturall law, together with the state of nature, began with *Adam*, not by any reuelation, but by ingrafted and inhered principles, and therefore is common to all nations, to all religions. Hence he gathers these two notes, first, that different and opposite religions may notwithstanding ioyne together in such things as are good, and alike approueable in both: for so we ioyne with dun-be Creatures in their naturall seruice, and that the bounds of the Church are not to be hedged in, according to mens priuate phantasies and imaginations; or according to the Prouinces, and iurisdiction of Prelats, but according to the vnity and consent of faith. Secondly, that be the religions neuer so opposite and contrary, yet all agree in the naturall law, and therefore are bound to performe to each other, all naturall rights, suppose the discharging of trust, where it is reposed, to vse morall honesty in our actions, obedience to our superiours, allegiance to the Prince, and the like; thus may different religions liue quietly and peaceably vnder one iust gouernment. If this were obserued, surely it would cause much peace in the Christian world, so much distracted and disquieted at this day, with infinit and innumerable sects and religions, pag. 34.

To conclude: What can be more glorious to God, then that his praise should be set forth by all his Creatures? what greater charity, then to comprehend them, not within the walls of our Christian Church (though once they were contained in the Arke) yet within the compasse and circuit of religion? what greater deuotion, then by their example to stirre vp thy selfe? though the Angels be out of sight, and thou canst not heare their hymnes, yet the beasts may awaken thy dulnesse; what greater humility, then to stoop to the basest wormes, and together with them, to associate thy selfe in Gods seruice?

These reasons (I confesse) did moue me to publish it: and as I had no other intent, but Gods glory, so I beseech him to
giue a blessing to thy reading hereof, that it may
tend to the increase of thy
deuotion.



THE
CREATVRES
PRAYSING GOD:
O.R,
THE RELIGION OF
dumbe Creatures.

PSAL. 148. 7, 8, 9, and 10, Verses.

7. *Praise the Lord upon earth, yee dragons and all deepes:*
8. *Fire and haile, snow and vapours, stormy winds,
fulfilling his word:*
9. *Mountaines and all hilles, fruitfull trees and all
Cedars,*
10. *Beasts and all castell, wormes and feathered
fowles.*



Wo absurdities may here seeme to be committed, at once, with one breath,; either that man should speake and exhort such Auditors, who are without sence, and therefore not capeable of exhortation, or that Creatures dumbe in themselves, should be exhorted to praise God, which seemes to be a thing proper to Angels and men.

B

Both

How God is
praised.

Both these are easily satisfied, if we rightly consider that the praises of God doe not necessarily imply the most exact and magnificent order and forme, such as might well be seeme the Maiestie of a Deitie (both men and Angels come short in that excellent seruice) but the praises of God require no more in effect, then the power and ability wherewith God hath first inabled the Creature: for he accepts our imperfect prayers, and descends to our weaknesse. Thus the stocks and the stones in their silence, and in their naturall properties; the beasts in their sounds and their cries, in their sence and in their motions, all serue to praise him: for God requires no more then he hath first giuen, the right imployment of his gifts is indeed to praise him.

Now man exhorting them to this their bounden duty, ioynes with them in their seruice, and as it were seemes to congratulate their praises of God: notwithstanding his owne disobedience and sinne, yet he reioyceth in their seruice, and exhorts them still to continue their praises of God.

Dumbe Crea-
tures speake,
and Man is
stricken
dumbe.

And though they seeme dumbe, yet in verity and truth they speake in their silence: for obiecting or presenting themselves to our view, shewing their excellent nature, their rare and wondertull properties, therein they speake their Maker. Man perceiuing and apprehending this, falls instantly to admiration, which is a kinde of naturall trance, wherein his speech failes him, as if he were for a time stricken dumbe together with the dumbe Creatures, to shew his fellow-feeling and symbolizing affection with them; at length he comes to himselfe, begins to breathe, then is he tied to his vtterance, as it were to comment vpon their silence, or to be their interpreter; for as God requires no more then the ability of the Creature, so he will admit no lesse, but expect, the vttermost extent of our power: In the dumbe Creatures their silence did suffice: Man hauing the free vse of his tongue, is therefore tied to adde Speech to their silence, Reason to their sence, and perswa-

perswading them not to any impossibility about their condition, as to beleue the mysteries of Grace, and the like, but applauding them in their owne naturall course, therein he seemes to exhort them, and thus exhorting them, stirs vp himselfe, and magnifies the Diuine prouidence, who first appointed the course: As God speaking the Word, all things were made: God speakes to nothing, and by vertue of his words, behold a Creation: so wee speaking to the dumbe Creatures, and in them approouing Gods workes, wee shew the conformitie of our wills to the Diuine institution.

For in our speech wee doe not alwaies respect others, but sometimes our selues. The most learned Preacher speaking to the most iudicious Auditory, yet cannot promise vnto himselfe happy successe; wee must looke to the discharge of our owne dutie, and not to the euent. Man speaking to the dumbe Creatures though they vnderstand him not, yet his owne bounden duty, together with the strength and vehemency of his affections, (that he can doe no lesse then speake in a cause which concernes Gods glory) this makes it no fruitlesse labour, and surely some profit thereby redounds: for whereas otherwise man were a stranger to beasts, and they seruing God in their owne kinde, their seruice should no way concerne him; yet now by vertue of his exhortation, he hath a part and portion in their obedience, and thus very cunningly, what is wanting in himselfe, he desires to supply it in them, to make their seruice seeme as his owne, as if forsooth they had beene rebellious, had it not beene for his perswasion; though himselfe be dissolute, yet it is he, that keepes all in good order: a pretty policy.

The end why
man exhorteth
beasts.

Thus as they were ordained for his naturall vse, for his food, clothing, labour: so it should seeme, they were appointed for his spirituall vse, to serue him in the nature of Chaplaines, that they should honour and praise God, while their master, sinfull and wretched man, dishonours him, yet their seruice might seeme to be done by his appointment.

The vse of the
creatures.

4 The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

The obedience of the Creatures is set forth by a similitude.

A corporation of all Creatures.

The religion of dumbe Creatures.

Though I will not excuse our selues, yet suffer mee to speake in their behalfe, who being dumbe, cannot speake for themselves, I know not how powerfull and effectuell mans words are, but surely in them I can doe no lesse then admire their obedience; the most dumbe and senselesse Creatures, the very Rocks and the Caues, if we speake vnto them, and speake aloud; instantly they make a reuerberation of our breath, whereby our owne words are renewed, as if they vnderstood, and did answere vs in our owne speech and language; suppose I should stretch out my voice, and cry vnto them *to praise God*, instantly you should heare them answer, *Praise God*: or if they faile in this Eccho, yet sure they will not faile in their conformity; herein they are not so properly our schollers, as presidents and examples to vs of obedience.

Then let vs conceiue that all the workes of God make one corporation, and are as members of one body, vnder one common gouernment. As then it appeares in man, that the heart giues direction to the dull hands, to be lifted vp in deuotion, and the dull hands knocke the sleepy heart, to awake her out of drowfinesse; And thus they doe mutually prouoke and stirre vp each other to ioyne in the seruice. As this befalls the parts of Man in respect of himselfe, so the like befalls Man and the Creatures in respect of the Vniuerse.

And that it may no way seeme strange, that dumbe Creatures should bee said to praise God, to speake most properly and most exactly of the praises of God, which surely consist in a religious worship and seruice of God; if, then I should say, that in the stocks and in the stones, in the foure-footed beasts, and generally in all the dumbe Creatures, that there is some obscure shadow, or some resemblance of religion, or rather indeed some proper kinde of religion: For there are diuers and seuerall kindes of religions, religions of all sorts, of all sizes, of all fashions (witness the diuersity of religions in these our daies) If then I should say that the dumbe Creatures haue likewise their

The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

S

their proper kinde of religion as well as men, and that they are very deuout, godly, zealous, strict and most religious in their owne kinde, euen farre aboue men; if I should say this; I would humbly craue your patience a while. Let mee bring my reasons and labour to proue it, that the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, howsoeuer wee may esteeme it, yet in verity and truth, it is a kinde of naturall religion.

Morall vertues we may suppose to be onely competent to man, as being grounded in the reasonable soule, yet therein the dumbe Creatures instruct vs, *God, sluggard, learne of the Pismire*; religion wee may conceiue to be mans owne proper inheritance, yet behold, wee are stirred vp by the example of the dumbe beasts, *The Oxe and the Asse acknowledge their Lord & Master, The Windes and the Seas obey him*. It should seeme, that as there is a religion aboue man, the religion of Angels, so there may be a religion beneath man, the religion of dumbe Creatures. For wheresoever there is a seruice of God, in effect it is a religion. Thus according to the seuerall degrees and difference of states, the state of nature, grace and glory, religion may likewise admit degrees, and difference.

The seruice
of God in
dumbe Crea-
tures, is their
religion.

Religion then, if I doe not mistake, consists of these foure parts, *A Creed* for our beliefe, which is the obiekt of our Faith; *A set forme of prayer for our supplication*, which is the anchor of our Hope: *A decalogue* or law for our practice, which is the rule of our Charity: Sacrifice and Sacraments for the vpshot and consummation of all, to season and sanctifie all. These are in effect the brieue heads of religion, as well appeares in our ordinary Catechisme, consisting of these foure parts, and therein is contained the summe of Religion. Now if all of these, or at least, if some of these can no way appeare in the Creatures, yet how great the similitude and analogy is betweene both, if you please to obserue with patience, and to condemne nothing vnheard, I doe well hope, that many things will be for our instruction, and all for our example and imitation.

The parts of
religion.

6 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

How we come
to know the
Creatures.

And first, of that knowledge which wee haue of the Creatures, how there should be such a mutuall intelligence or correspondency betweene vs, as that we should truly know them and their religion, as if wee vnderstood their language, & were thorowly acquainted with all the secrets and mysteries of their Church and State. The first notice then which wee haue of the Creatures, it is by an information of sence, wherein the Diuine prouidence hath so fitted and porportioned things each to other, suppose the faculty to the object, sence to things sensible, that wee instantly receiue them, not with any difficulty of learning, but by a naturall instinct: Thus it is betweene the sensible man, and the visible world, being Creatures of like condition, we doe easily conceiue them.

Sence is the
mother of Ido-
latry.

Thus sence first serues to informe vs: but if wee should here rest onely in the information of sence, this were most dangerous: from hence grew our first error: whereas beauty was giuen to the Creatures, to point out the incomparable beauty of God, many beholding them, haue so doted vpon them, and so farre enamoured with their beauty, that they could goe no farther, but haue taken the Creatures for God, supposing that God himselfe could not be more glorious.

The vnder-
standing
reacheth be-
yond sence.

Thus whereas a right vnderstanding would conclude, great is the beauty of Creatures, therefore how great and incomparable is the beauty of God! sence, as being of a lower straine, not able to aime at such a high pitch, rather inferres, Such is the beauty of Creatures, that our sence cannot possibly comprehend any greater beauty; therefore the Creatures are God. Thus sence and sence alone, without other information, is indeed the mother and nurse of idolatry; and if wee should proceed to no further search and inquisition, then the Creatures might seeme to blaspheme, to make themselues Gods; being onely witnesses to the Deity, they might seeme to assume vnto themselues the right of the Deitie: yet herein let me excuse them, they are innocent, they doe it not of themselues, but

but through our corruption some sensuall men haue ascribed it: for being not able to conceiue greater perfection, it is naturall to man to acknowledge God in the highest. Thus some haue worshipped the Sunne, the Moone, the Starres, diuers and seuerall Creatures, and the like.

By the way giue me leaue to make some vse of their error, and here to crie out, O what an excellent workeman is God, that euen his owne common and meanest workes should be of that excellency, as that they should be taken for God! And thus Idolatry which seemes wholly to detract from God, and to ascribe all to the creatures, yet by an ouer-ruling providence of God, contrary to her owne intent, in so much magnifying the Creatures, doth in them and by them set forth the supereminent greatnesse of *God the Creator.*

The good vse of Idolatry.

This were sufficient, if mans whole knowledge were plunged and puzzled in sence, and that hee had no other guide or direction saue onely sence; but man hath further a reasonable soule, which taking information from sence, as it well becommes his condition, vseth degrees of discourse, and in this reasonable soule wee shall finde this ingrafted, as a first ground and principle, that in all our knowledge, we must first search out the cause of euery effect; for euery effect naturally points out his cause: and there is no relation so necessary, as is that which is betweene the cause and the effect. As it is the truth of things, that nothing can subsist without a cause: so in our apprehension, that we cannot conceiue the one without relation to the other: there is no knowledge without the knowledge of causes, and therefore we striue and endeavour to discerne the cause in the effects, and the effects in the cause.

In reason we cannot consider the effects without their cause.

By vertue of this ingrafted principle, wee cannot consider the creatures alone, and by themselves, but together with them and in them wee must search out their cause. Here then Reason would faine know, whether the Creatures be the effects of another, or causes of themselves?

Reason as apt to discourse, so to search and enquire.

This

8 The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

This is the first proposition, or *Quare*.

Reasonableness
of the dumbe
beasts.

Now you shall vnderstand, that euery search and inquisition, when we know not things of our selues, but that wee take our information from others, wee seeke them from others, and learne them of others; this is a kinde of demand: of whom then should reason demand this? not of her selfe, then surely of none but the Creatures; or who should make answer to this demand? not reason to her selfe, then surely none but the Creatures. Marke then the answer of the Creatures, to this demand of reason; their answer as giving an account of their faith: for faith is the ground and foundation of religion, and without faith, religion cannot subsist. Marke then the faith of the Creatures in their answers: their answers, I say, not in expresse termes, for this is not necessary: men that are speechlesse and dumbe, may notwithstanding make a confession of their faith, *Digitis nuncq̃ loquuntur*, so may the dumbe and speechlesse Creatures, they may likewise vse outward signes and tokens, to give a confession of their faith; their answer is answerable to their nature, their silent nature, and their still properties giue this resolution, and make this answer, and that without any difficulty.

The answer of
dumbe crea-
tures vnto
reason.

For their bounden nature must necessarily imply, that the limitation of their nature proceeds from another. Here is their *answer*: their composition and dissolution must necessarily presuppose first a compounder: here is their *answer*: their seuerall times of rising and setting must argue, that there being a time, when they were not, needs they must want a cause first to subsist; being not by themselves, or for themselves alone, but carrying a mutuall respect each to other: suppose the heauens to the earth, the earth to the heauens, the faculty to the object, the object to the faculty: this must needs inforce, that they could not thus seuerally ordaine themselves, but that there was some other extrinsecall cause, which knowing both, and making both, appointed each for other. To conclude, that vnreasonable creatures should moue, according to the rules

rules of reason, and such as want vnderstanding, should be guided by the direction of an vnderstanding; this must needs argue that some intelligent cause did first ordaine them, which now preserues them in their naturall course.

This in brieft is their answer; for they intimate thus much, the Creatures acknowledge themselves to be no more then effects, they pointed out a cause, an intelligent cause. Here then we must exclude blind fortune, for that things by great chance should fall into such an excellent order, reason it selfe seemes to oppose it, which admits no fortune, but deemes it as a base-borne childe of ignorance: which if wee should yeeld, it would rather prooue the cause of disorder and confusion, and it would vndoubtedly imply a contradiction, to ascribe the workes of foresight and providence vnto a blind guide.

The beasts acknowledge a God, and deny all fortune.

Thus then the Creatures being true, reall, positiue effects, they seeme to confesse, or rather to challenge vnto themselves a true, reall, positiue efficient cause, which in effect is to acknowledge a God, & a Maker. And this their knowledgement of God, as it is fitly gathered from the Creatures, so it is in verity and in truth no lesse then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures: all of them testifying the same truth, doe in a sort make one common confession of their faith: *Accedentem ad Deum oportet credere quod sit Deus*; this is the first article of their Creed, that they acknowledge a God; thus they cannot be iustly taxed with infidelity. Herein they farre exceed the Atheist, who denying his Maker, must therefore make himselfe liue of himselfe, and so consequently should preserue himselfe. Surely of all others he is the greatest and the most notable Impostor, denying the true God, he makes himselfe God, for he made himselfe. But I will as easily beleue, that man either should not be borne, or being borne, that he should not decline in yeres, not be subiect to sorrow, grieve, or infirmity, and that he should neuer taste of death or corruption, as that he should first subsist without a Maker.

The naturall implicate faith of beasts.

The beasts may teach the Atheists.

Thus then the Creatures agree that there is a God.

C

Now

10 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

The dumbe
Creatures
confesse one
God.

Now let vs heare what other Testimony they giue of this God; and looke how many Testimonies they giue of God, in effect they rehearse so many Articles of their Creed; the first attribute of God is, *ut sit unus*, as God speaks of himselfe: *Ego Deus unus, non habebis Deos alienos, &c.* Let vs then enquire of the Creatures, whether they acknowledge one God, or will admit a plurality of gods in their seruice. And heere vpon the first view and appearance, they seeme vnto me to cry and to testifie *one God, one God*, for all nature is directed to one end: whereas if there were many efficientes, they would vndoubtedly intend their seuerall ends. The world is circular, which best resembleth the figure of one: all the streames are reduced to one head: all the degrees of things still tend to the highest, there being in nature a priority and posteriority; Euery gouernment tends and ends in a Monarchie; Nature will not endure many competitors; order and decency require as much in effect: All heat is reduced to one first heat; all bodies to one first body. Philosophy beats vpon this Axiome, that nature desires to worke with the fewest instruments, and therefore euery thing is to be reduced to the fewest principles. In the constitution of any thing, she requires but a couple; for the effecting of any thing, one will suffice; to admit of more, would rather hinder and distract the worke, then any way further or helpe the action.

The Creatures
deny that there
can be many
gods.

Thus to acknowledge one God: the workmanship and fabrike of the whole world will testifie as much, wherein the foot-steps and impression of one and the same God doe most eminently appeare, all of them giuing sufficient demonstration of one and the same wisdom and prouidence, which appeares alike in all, grounding all his workes, and all his actions, vpon the selfe-same principles and rules of his owne wisdom: there are not gods of the Mountaines, gods of the Valleys, gods of the Land, and gods of the Ocean: for the fishes of the sea, the birds of the ayre, the beasts of the field, haue a like fashion and forme

forme for their outward feature, and a like inward instinct and providence for their course and direction, which similitude of nature must needs proceed from one and the same ground of wisdom; the voice and verdict of nature will likewise testifie as much, which being to admit some infinit power, transcending reason, and the course of all Creatures, will therefore tie it selfe to admit of the least inconuenience, rather of one then of a multitude.

Heere is the second Article of their faith; as they acknowledge a God, so they acknowledge but one God, and therefore they worship the true God. Thus the inuisible God visibly appeares in the visible Creatures; their multitude altogether concurring to one end, betokens the vnity of their Maker, which Maker being the first and sole efficient cause, needs we must conceiue in him, whatsoever belongs to a first moouer; Now behold how many excellent attributes of God doe issue out of this one ground, and are hence discovered, as wee consider God to be the first cause and moouer.

Suppose for his owne absolute necessity, that being the first, he must subsist of himselfe, and can doe no lesse then subsist, and therefore subsist from eternity. And thus subsisting of himselfe, he must be immutable and vnchangeable in himselfe, that he may likewise hold out for eternity. Being thus the cause of himselfe, hee must haue the best and most absolute being; And this being must needs be infinit, since he is of himselfe, and cannot prescribe himselfe bounds, nor cannot admit bounds from another, when as there is nought but himselfe; Being thus one, infinit, and from eternity, he must be without mixture or composition, *purus actus*, most pure and simple in his owne nature: for heere were not diuers ingredients, which being first simple in themselues, might afterwards compound him; And as he is without composition, so he cannot admit diuersity of parts, which doe indeed arise onely from a composition, which parts in respect of themselues should be more or lesse perfect, when as the whole Deity is in-

The Creature,
point out
God, as the
first moouer.

Hence is im-
plied Gods
necessity,

Immutability,

Eternity,

Bonity,
Infinity,

Simplicity,

Without va-
riety of parts.

12 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

Without di-
uersity of fa-
culties.

finitly perfect, and cannot admit degrees of comparison.

Being thus without composition, or diuersity of parts, he cannot admit variety of faculties, which seeme to be tied and annexed to the diuersity of parts, and therefore those many seuerall perfections which appeare in the Creatures, they are but one absolute perfection in God. Thus the wisdom of God is the power of God, the power of God is the will of God, the will of God is the iustice of God, the iustice of God, is the mercy of God: all these attributes can admit no difference betweene themselues, and all these attributes are but one and the selfe-same God, though to vs, both for our apprehension, and in respect of Gods actions, they seeme to be diuers and distinct, yet are they linked, and together incorporated in that one and infinit nature of God, which cannot admit a variety. Thus farre of God in himselfe: and all this we must suppose in *a first cause or moouer*: and all this, it is no lesse in effect, then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures, as they doe necessarily point out and demonstrate this first cause or moouer.

Gods wis-
dome.

Freewill.

Power.

Providence.

Now in respect of the Creatures, nothing can be wanting to God, which was necessarily required for the workmanship. Suppose an infinit wisdom in contriuing the worke, which otherwise would aske an infinit time of deliberation, as I may so say, a world of consultation were requisite for the framing of this world, were it not supplied in an instant by the infinit wisdom of God, which wisdom more especially and immediatly appeares in the comprehending and vnderstanding of himselfe. Secondly, hauing once laid downe the plot-forme, then succeeds a most *absolute freewill* in bounding and disposing his owne actions. Thirdly, intending to create, and being resolved of the manner, then followes an *infinit power* to put all in execution. Fourthly, hauing once finished the worke, necessary it is, that there should be a continuance of the same infinit wisdom, will, and power, in his *Providence*, for the continuance and preservation of his workes.

The

The Creatures can no more preserue themselves, then at first subsist of themselves, and therefore they want a continuall concourse, and sweet influence of this first moouer: for as it is a property of God to be independent, so it is a property of Creatures to be alwaies dependent; and this serues as a bridle to curbe them, besides the ouer-ruling power and prerogatiue which God reserues in himselfe, whereof I will not dispute.

See here how many excellent attributes of God are discovered by the information and instructions which wee haue from the Creatures; these are the Articles of their faith, and all these arise out of this one ground (as the Schoole speakes) *ratione, & necessitate causalitatis*, as wee consider God to be the first cause and moouer. Alas, I should be infinit, if I would proceed in this subiect to speake of God, onely so farre forth as the Creatures doe testifie of God, which in effect is their faith; but I will passe this ouer: yet giue me leaue to passe my censure vpon it.

Audita & approbata sunt omnia: vpon due examination I finde them to be sound and Orthodoxall, I cannot taxe them with Atheisme or Heresie, but what they say or testifie of God, it is most true; onely with this defect, that they say not enough; nature cannot be raised aboue nature; the mysteries of grace fall not within the compasse of naturall bounds. Why, thus there are degrees of faith amongst vs: we see but in part, wee know but in part, all cannot conceiue mysteries alike, and the most faithfull man may truly say, *Lord, I beleene, Lord, helpe my vnbeliefe*. And thus it is with the Creatures, what they testifie of God, is most true, but they testifie not enough, yet what they testifie not, it is not out of frowardnesse, or that they are hard of beliefe, but it is for want of capacity: here then they are sufficiently excused;

Excused I say, in respect of themselves, but whether any wrong or iniurie be done vnto vs, this is a question; for if the Creatures propose vnto vs this knowledge of God as a perfect rule of our faith, to which we should not adde,

Whereas here are many grounds where by we come to the knowledge of God.

Natures testimony of God is defective and insufficient.

14 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

Whether this defect in Gods knowledge appears by the testimony of nature.

The ground of all the mysteries in Religion.

Causes are not fully discerned by their effects.

but that we should be tied to the stint of their beliefe : to have no more faith then they, this were dangerous; for to admit this, were to oppose and contradict all the mysteries in religion, which are not discovered by their light; this were in effect to seduce vs, to make vs of Christians, meere naturalls; Indeed they haue already too farre preuailed on our passions and on our affections, that we are almost growne sensuall and beastly, like vnto them, as if we were of their common-wealth; but if they shall presse further vpon vs, to worke vpon our soules, our consciences, and our vnderstandings, to intice vs to be of their faith, of their Church, of their religion, to make vs meere naturalls, like to themselues, this were most intolerable. So then the question remaines, whether the Creatures, or nature, I meane, in the Creatures, or that which is the same in effect, whether naturall reason proceeding vpon naturall grounds, whether these supposing their owne ability in the fulnesse of Gods knowledge, seeme to exclude grace, or otherwise in the weakenesse of their knowledge, shewing their owne insufficiency, seeme onely to make way, and serue as an introduction to grace? It is a question indeed, in my iudgement, of all others most worthy to be resolved: for in effect it implies the whole ground and foundation of all our mysteries, and it stands thus; whether by the light of our owne naturall reason, we are to beleue no more of God, then appears in the Creatures; or whether the same light of our owne naturall reason will informe vs, that there are other greater mysteries to be receiued of God, more then those natural attributes, which are discerned by his works?

For your satisfaction herein, you may be pleased to vnderstand, that what knowledge wee haue of God by the light of our naturall reason, it is not deriued immediatly from God himselfe, but by a reflection, onely so farre foorth as God is discerned in the glasse of his Creatures; now this is a rule in all arts, that no causes can fully, exactly and totally appear in their effects, as hauing first a proper

per nature allotted to themselves, before they were ordained to action: first, they are in themselves, before they come to relation, so that for the knowledge of causes in themselves, there must be some further search and inquisition, more then the effects demonstrate: this shall appeare, by considering the diuersity of causes, which I will suppose to be of three sorts.

First, naturall causes: and these are not sufficiently discerned by their owne naturall effects: (*E.g.*) by the nature and properties of a weed, you cannot discover the whole nature, and properties of the Sunne or the earth; for the inward nature and the outward actions, are not alwaies of like extent, nor doe they agree in all accidents. Naturall causes.

More especially this will appeare in voluntary causes, that they cannot totally be discerned by their workes, when as the limitation of the worke, and the diuersitie of the worke proceeds, not from the necessity of the nature, but depends vpon the free will of the Maker. Thus one and the same voluntary cause brings forth various and different effects, and therefore cannot imprint her whole and perfect image in all. Thus if man were knowne by his workes, we should neuer make search for malefactors, but every one should instantly appeare. Voluntary causes.

Now there are yet other causes, and these are of a different nature, and condition: suppose the Angelicall spirits, and the materiall world; God and the Creatures, a spirituall Deity and a corporeall worke, *hac differunt toto caelo, differunt plusquam genere*: how is it possible then, that the one should fully and perfectly discover the other? Thus in a word to make application of all, God being a cause, a voluntary cause, a cause of another nature, surely the whole vertue, and power of the Deity cannot be discerned or laid open by the workes of the Deity. *E.g.* By the building of this house though the skill of the workeman sufficiently appeares, yet you cannot informe me of his age, his name, stature, strength, condition, complection, the place of his birth, the place of his dwelling, his means, Supernaturall causes.
The application.
An instance.
his

16 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

How nature
directs vnto
grace.

his maintenance, and none of all these will euer appeare by the worke: and thus it befalls the Creatures in reference to God, they set forth indeed many excellent attributes of God, yet they doe not intend to giue vs full satisfaction in the knowledge of God; but in humility seeme to confesse, that there is something in the Deity, which appeares not in the Creatures, and therefore in their owne want and defect, they referre vs to Gods owne reuelation of himselfe.

Nature will
not trespasse
beyond her
owne bounds.

For in our knowledge of God, the Creatures are not our bounds, but serue onely to point out a Deitie, and then to cry, *Plus ultra, plus ultra*, and so to leaue to God himselfe, sending vs from the outward shop of his workes, to the inward schoole of his words, from the theatre of the Creatures, to the sanctuary of his dwelling, there to learne a new lesson in the knowledge of God. Here is another article of their faith, another Testimony of God, in effect they confesse that God being incomprehensible, he cannot be comprehended in his workes: hence proceeds their submission, considering their owne weaknesse, and the infinit distance betweene God and themselves, they will not dare or attempt to discouer the whole Deity, nor will they iustly be taxed with curiosity, but content themselves with such a competent measure in the discovery of Gods knowledge, as their owne nature is capeable.

Reason gives
way to myste-
ries.

Thus then the Creatures not fully reuealing God, there is some place left for a further knowledge of God, and to this end there must be some further search and inquisition made after God; here then is opened a gap to let in all the mysteries of our Christian faith and religion: suppose the eternall generation of the Sonne, the admirable proceession of the Spirit, the glorious and indiuisible Trinity, the miraculous incarnation of the God-head, and the like. Nature indeed cannot reueale these mysteries, and being once reuealed, nature cannot contradict them; she can neither propose nor oppose them; for as all contrarieties are in the

She neither
reueales, nor
impugnes
them.

the same kinde suppose heat to coldnesse, moysture to drought, and the like (these are qualities of the same kind) so in our vnderstanding, all opposition must be betweene things of like nature; but if secrets and mysteries be of another kinde, of a different nature, of a different world, and therefore of a different speculation; then surely one and the same ground of reason which is fitted and proportioned to this our present state and condition, cannot equally suffice both, much lesse impugne and oppose things farre aboue and beyond her reach and capacity. So then, for the right vnderstanding of mysteries which are of a different kind, we must expect a reason of a different kinde, which in effect is a sanctifying grace, *Gods holy Spirit* to guide vs.

The necessity of faith.

And to this end consider how absurd were it, that man should haue no other teachers, or instructors in the knowledge of God, but only the dumbe Creatures, which must be admitted, in case we had no other knowledge of God, but onely of such attributes, as are discerned by his works; how improbable is it, that reason should haue no other information, but onely from sence and sensible obiects, euen concerning such things, which infinitely transcend and are aboue all reason, and all sence, as if a man should stoope downe to lay hold on such things, which are indeed aboue him, and beyond his reach?

Dumbe Creatures cannot be the sole teachers of man concerning God.

Thus in humility the Creatures acknowledge their owne bounds; as bounds in their substance, bounds in their power; so bounds in their knowledge; they will not trespasse beyond their bounds, they will not incroach vpon mysteries, which standing a farre off, belonging to another world, and therefore farre remote from the view of nature. We want a *sanctifying grace*, like a prospectiue glasse to discern them. Thus it falls out in nature, euen in respect of naturall things; the sunne and the starres must first send downe a light, and without their owne light, they cannot be discerned; so God himselfe must first giue a testimony of himselfe, and then inlighten our hearts, for

Faith is a kinde of reason elevated aboue a naturall condition.

D

receiuing

18 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

receiuing this testimony, and without this his owne testimony, he cannot be reuealed.

Naturall reason acknowledgeth mysteries in generall.

Thus to conclude, though the Creatures, or nature I meane in the Creatures, or that which is the same in effect, though naturall reason proceeding vpon naturall grounds, though these doe not discover our mysteries in particular, yet in generall they seeme to imply that mysteries there are, nature seemes to confesse that there is a power aboue nature, and this power did then appeare in the first institution of nature; reason seemes to acknowledge that all faculties hauing their owne proper bounds, she her selfe cannot be without bounds, and therefore many things there may be and are beyond the comprehension of reason. Thus much in generall.

Supernaturall workes confirme supernaturall words.

Now for prooffe and confirmation of our mysteries in particular, we doe not require their testimony, for we haue other greater proofes then theirs, and therefore we will ease them of that labour: they haue the workes of nature to testifie the God of nature. We haue workes aboue nature, miracles beyond all naturall causes, to testifie our mysteries aboue nature: they haue a Creation for their being; a prouidence for their preseruacion, &c. we haue an eternall prescience, an immutable decree, prophecies and predictions, fore-telling future euents, together with the full accomplishing of these prophecies; in a word, they haue the voice of nature; we haue the testimony of the God of nature.

Reason discerning the open miracles, cannot gaine say the secret mysteries.

This I speake, looking to the generall nature, yet it cannot be denied, but by a particular charge, as it were a speciall Commission, some Creatures may likewise be truly and properly said to giue a testimony, and to confirme our mysteries of grace; for the same God is God both of nature and grace, he hath laid the foundation of grace in the ground-worke of nature: as grace doth sanctifie nature, so nature supports grace; as grace workes by nature, so nature may beare witnesse to the working of grace. Thus all miracles, what did they argue, but that the Creatures

tures changing their owne nature, did therein shew their obedientiall power to be at his command and direction, who first appointed their nature, who can change and alter their nature, and now workes aboue and beyond nature; these workes surmounting nature, his words may likewise surpassse nature. Thus mysteries aboue naturall apprehension, are no more incredible then workes aboue naturall power; both carry the same stampe, and are of the same mint, they giue credit and testimony to each other. Miracles we discern by sence, we acknowledge in reason, to be such as indeed they are, miracles beyond all naturall power. Then presently our faith not carried with a vaine credulity, not seduced with sophistry, but being truly informed of the workes, presently she stoopes in humility and hearkens to the words, and therein she acknowledgeth *mysteries, mysteries* beyond mans reason and comprehension.

Thus it should seeme, that some *Giantlike Deity*, by his Reason, workes, by his words hath made knowne vnto the world, that his power and his wisdom surpasseth all naturall bounds, while the Creatures shewing in themselues the effects of his power, do likewise point out the depth of his wisdom, and hereby conclude an infinit power, an infinit wisdom, both which cannot admit mans weake opposition or disputation, but rather should worke in vs admiration, astonishment and silence.

Admiration,
Faith.

For as in miracles, the dumbe Creatures, notwithstanding their naturall inclination, yet are they ouer-ruled by Gods power: so in mysteries, man, notwithstanding his naturall wrangling, and contentious wit, and the scrupulous curiosity of his owne minde, yet must he submit himselfe to Gods words. Thus the power manifested, serues as a scale to the will reuealed: miracles prooue the truth of mysteries; the one our naturall reason may easily see, and discern; and these being discerned, doe prooue the infallible truth of the other.

Miracles
prooue myste-
ries.

This by way of digression: for this is extraordinary vn-

20 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

The naturall
implicite faith
of the Crea-
tures.

usuall, and therefore onely incident to some few of them; according to times, place, and occasions. Come we then to their generall faith, which I call the naturall faith of the Creatures, which faith implies the whole knowledge of God, whereof the Creatures informe vs, how farre by their direction wee may proceed in *Gods knowledge*, and where we must desist. This knowledge of God being fitly gathered from the Creatures, can be no lesse then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures; all of them testifying the same truth, doe in a sort make one common confession of their faith, they say their Creed together, as we doe; this is enough, to saue and excuse them from the imputation of infidelity: for children doe no more in their baptisme, whom notwithstanding we know to be in the number of Gods faithfull people.

The seuerall
kinds of faith.

Faith doth not alwaies imply the actuall surrendring vp of our wills and consents, but sometimes an habit or forme; neither is euery faith, a iustifying faith: but there is a testifying faith, an historicall faith; yea, sometimes an imputatiue faith; and there being so many kinds and degrees of faith, I pray be not so vncharitable, as to make the poore dumbe Creatures infidels.

Dumbe Crea-
tures may as
well be said to
haue faith as
knowledge.

For there is a wisdom of nature, there is a knowledge in dumbe beasts, they know their times and their seasons, their manner of working, and what is fit and agreeable to the state of their bodies; and why may there not be a naturall faith in them, as well as a naturall wisdom and knowledge? for these seeme to be as proper to man as his faith; yet these we ascribe to dumbe beasts, though they want a reasonable discourse: and why may we not as well yeeld vnto them a faith, not a sanctifying, but a naturall faith? for I will not exceed the bounds of nature in them: their faith is an historicall faith, or a testifying faith; for this their naturall faith serues onely to giue testimony to the God of nature.

Surely they haue a faith, and what is more, they preach this faith vnto vs, together with many morall instructions,
and

and many good admonitions, they are, I confesse, very learned preachers, and doe exceedingly edifie, for they were able to strike the very heathen (who were without the knowledge of the true God) with wonder and amazement: the most dumbe and sencelesse Creatures beare witnesse and testifie of God, *The beauens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handyworke: one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another.* Thus they instruct vs, while they catechize each other; and as we exhort them to praise God, so they exhort vs, that what is wanting in them, they may supply it in vs: (here is their cunning:) they are dumbe, therefore they make vs their Aduocates, their instruments and spokesmen, they vse our tongues to set forth Gods praise, giuing vs occasion, and stirring vs vp to praise him, our praise becomes theirs, and their praise is made ours; wee are their God-fathers to make the confession of their faith; they are our remembrancers, & serue as the seales of our truth. And thus there is not onely a communion of Saints, but a *communion of Creatures*, which ioyne together in one naturall seruice of God; as we partake with them in substance, so we may ioyne with them, or rather learne of them, the commendations of God.

The dumbe
Creatures
preach their
faith vnto vs:

And exhorting
vs, they praise
God by vs.

Thus much of their faith: wherein if I haue beene somewhat obscure, I pray remember the nature of faith, which is of things inuisible, and so from their faith and testimonies of God, come we then to their praiers, and praises of God. It is not onely proper to Angels to be continually busied in praising and magnifying of God, singing their *Halleluiahs*, &c. but euen the most dumbe Creatures partake in this seruice, and beare their part in this song, though not in such an excellent manner. This is natures daily taske and imployment: for what is naturall to things in generall, therein nature cannot be wanting to her selfe, but must first know and acknowledge her owne properties, within her selfe; *artificem collaudat opus*, that the worke should praise and commend the workman, I take

As Angels, so
dumbe Crea-
tures continu-
ally praise
God.

22 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

it to be a seruice imposed, or an homage done to the Lord. Thus wheresoeuer ye discerne the worke, you cannot exclude the workeman, both are of like extent, since to be, and to be the effects of his power, both are alike inseparable from the Creatures; who vpon the first view and appearance doe plainly shew, that what they are in themselues, this they haue from their Maker; their perfection speakes his excellency; their continuance, his eternity; if they haue ought praise worthy in themselues, this makes for his praise, who is most worthy of all praise, though we most vnworthy to set forth this praise.

The perfection of the Creatures.

Consider then in the Creatures in generall: First, their proper and bounded nature, together with so great variety and perfection in their owne kinde. Secondly, in this nature, such excellent properties, affections, and accidents which doe so well agree with the nature. Thirdly, from this nature, such strange and wonderfull apparitions and effects. Fourthly, by this nature such an excellent order, and proportion both in themselues, and to the whole Vniuerse. Fifthly, through this nature, such a constancy and perseuerance in keeping their due course; in performing their duty, seruice and ministry to man.

How Creatures praise their Maker.

O excellent Artist, that could' so sweetly tune nature to make such a melody, where there is such a concert and agreement on euery side; the parts to the whole, the whole to the parts, each to it selfe, all to the Maker! O excellent melody! here is neither sound, nor voice to the eare, yet a most sweet and delectable harmony, a musicke of nature. Doe not then harken with your eares, but listen with your mindes, and in stead of notes, conceiue this ditty: *We sing the praise of our Maker.*

The temple of the Creatures and their Leiturgie.

This praise and seruice of God seemes to resemble our mentall prayer: for it is inward, secret, and consists only in Meditation. Come we then to their vocall prayers, which in effect is our Leiturgy or Church-seruice: and first, behold the magnificence of their Temple, which is the materiall world, the naturall Temple of God, a Temple made by

by God for himselfe, and by himselfe consecrated to his owne vse, where the heauens are the rooffe, the earth is the footstoole, and wherein nothing is wanting, which may serue for beauty and ornament: here all the Creatures dayly attend, and are euer conuersant in this Temple: *For the Sparrow hath found her a house, and the Swallow a nest, where she may lay her young ones, euenthine Altars, O Lord God of Hostes, my King and my God: Blessed are all they that dwell in thy Courts, for they will euer be praying thee, Psal. 84.3,4.*

Decent and comely ceremonies, which serue to stirre vp our dulnesse, and to set forth Gods magnificence, and therefore are most commendable in vs, yet they haue none; They vse no ceremony, but for they want none: in stead of them, they haue a truth and syncerity in their seruice, without hypocrisie or dissimulation: they are not troubled or disquieted in their owne thoughts (as we are) that they should be admonished by outward ceremonies: but they are like the Angels in heauen, wholly intent to their seruice. I would I could say as much for our selues.

Now listen a while to their prayers: here euery creature hath his sound & his voice, *Vox natura inclamantis Domini natura, The voice of nature calling upon the God of nature.* Nature is no foole, that she should babble and talke to her selfe, nor is there any other nature, with whom she might haue conference; she is no more idle and superfluous in her words, then in her workes: *Natura nihil fecit frustra, natura nihil dicet frustra.* Then vndoubtedly in these cries, she offers vp her prayers to her Maker.

Now would you know the meaning and sence of these prayers? Surely I conceiue them to be to this or the like purpose. *Venite, iubilemus Deo nostro, qui fecit nos, exultemus & letemur in ipso:* (the very beginning of our Morning Seruice) *O all yee workes of the Lord, praise ye the Lord, blesse him, and magnifie him for euer.* Doe you yet require some more particular notice, what they request in their prayers? Truly they pray in a strange tongue, I neuer learnt their language;

The prayers of the Creatures.

The generall intent of prayers.

24 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

language; yet this I can say for a truth, in mine owne experience:

The diuersity
of their
prayers.

That according to the diuersity of occasions, you shall finde a difference in their prayers: in their ioy and mirth, you may discerne their pleasant notes of thankfulness: in their griefe and heauinesse, you shall heare their sorrowfull sighes, and groanes of complaints. Then it should seeme, nature becomes a petitioner: and to whom should she petition, but to that higher power which sits aboue nature? Though the dumbe Creatures haue neither speech nor language among them, yet *their sound is gone out into all quarters*: though their cries be inarticulate, and vnsignificant to vs, yet are they vnderstood of their Maker; he that sees the secrets of our hearts, can much more easily discerne the intent of their prayers.

They praise
God in the
best manner.

The Church-
musicke of the
Creatures.

But in this their seruice, or prayers, doe they vse no meanes of deuotion? haue they no respect to Gods magnificence? but confusedly doe mumble vp, or bellow out their prayers, as if with their crying, and roaring, God could be praised? which were indeed more to dishonour God in the manner, then to honour him in the seruice. Herein, to giue you full satisfaction, I say, that euery thing, according to the vttermost extent of his own ability, doth offer vp his seruice to God in the most excellent manner. To instance only in their Quier, or in their Church-musick, here you haue a full, perfect, and compleate Quier; sufficient variety of voices; the little chirping birds, the Wren and the Robin, they sing a treble; the Gold-finch, the Nightingale, they ioyne in the meane; the Black-bird, the Thrush, they beare the tenour, while the foure-footed beasts, with their bleating and bellowing, they sing a base: how other birds sing in their order, I referre you to the skilfull Musicians: here is diuersity of musicke, some haue their seuerall notes, as if they sung verses alone, and did pause and keepe time like Queristers, while others vse their continued songs, that all might please with variety.

These songs are fitted for euery season, as if they had
some

some proper service, some collects appointed for the time; Thus they alter and varie according to the quarters of the yere, the houres of the day, the coasts of the world; and as if they were in some solemne procession, and did purpose to compasse and circuit the whole earth, with their An- themes and Letanies: some sing while they are flying, others make choice of the woods for their standing, some in the groues, some in the meddowes, some in the plaines, some on the house toppe: here are their voyces. Now for their instruments; me thinks the rockes, the caues, and the woods, with a hollownesse of their sound, like a mu- sicall instrument, send forth an Eccho, and seeme to vnite their songs, together with the pleasant noyse in the fall, and gliding of waters; the pretty, sharpe whistling of the winde, which serues as a ground to their musicke.

Their variety
of Anthems
and Collects.

And what is more, belecue it, they obserue their cano- nicall houres, as if they were some religious order, they haue their lauds, their Mattens, their Vespers, in effect, they haue their Morning prayer, and their Euening song, for these are the speciall and the appointed times for their deuotion; neither will I conceale that which I haue so often obserued; sometimes one bird prouokes another to sing, then me thinks I heare the Churches Antiphona's, one side of the Quier answering another, a custome which hath anciently beene brought into the Church, according to the patterne and president of the Seraphims, *Isa. 6. Et clamabant alter ad alterum, & dicebant; Sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus exercituum.*

Their canoni-
call houres.

To conclude, how effectually, and acceptable their prayers are, I will not demand of them, they may chance to be foolish and partiall in their owne behalfe; herein are, take rather the testimony of God himselfe, and that to the poorest bird, which of all others we might suppose to be most neglected, for it is a night-bird, melancholy, ill presaging it hath a harsh note, and it feeds vpon carrion, and yet notwithstanding the *Psalmist* can testifie, *Psal. 147. 9. Escam dat pullis cornorum innocentibus eum,* as if

How powerful
their prayers

26 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

God kept a watch over the nest, and did teach the young Rauens to call vpon him, and in effect to say grace, and to giue him thankes before the receiuing of their food.

The decalogue of the Creatures.

After their prayers followes in the next place, their decalogue or law: and truly, for the practice of their religion in their liues and conuersations, which appeares in the keeping and fulfilling of this decalogue or naturall law, I cannot but greatly admire them. They are still carried with the same course, which God first appointed; the Sunne keeps his iust houre of rising, the Moone obserues her certaine reuolutions, so all the dumbe Creatures, and all the beasts of the field doe the like: you may assoone abolish their nature, as accuse them for the breach of the law of nature; they are led by their owne instinct, they haue no liberty of will to oppose, they cannot be refractory, but are like the Angels in heauen, sealed and confirmed in their state and condition. Here is their conformity to Gods naturall law; as farre forth as God hath giuen them a law, they are surely led by the law, and the most sanctified man can doe no more, but according to the measure of grace that is giuen him. Alas! I should shame our selues, if I should speake of our disobedience, in respect of theirs.

The morall vertues of dumbe beasts.

Heare then how all those naturall vertues appeare in them, how they are rooted and grounded in them, suppose temperance, iustice, sobriety, industry, naturall affection and the like; I will forbear to speake, being verily perswaded that nature hath proposed them vnto vs, as presidents of each vertue, that hauing giuen vs a rule, some inclination in our selues to morall vertues, she might annexe some example to that rule, the example of dumbe Creatures; that if we our selues, through the malignity of our wills, should practise to abolish the law in our hearts (for so the custome of sinne takes away the sence of sinne) yet still the law might be reserued whole and entire, together with the exact patterne and practice of the law, as I may so say, bookes of reports in the Creatures; and to this

this purpose I had made a long discourse, but to enter vpon it, I should proue tedious: therefore I will forbear to make any further mention of this, which indeed is so euident and palpable, as that it cannot admit a contradiction.

From their law, come we then to their sacrifice, which truly is as naturall as is their law: for sacrifice is a pledge of our thankfulness, which thankfulness is a branch of common iustice, this iustice is naturally ingrafted in all Creatures, that receiuing our selues from God, we should offer vp our selues vnto God, or at least, something in lieu of our selues, some quit-rent or fine in the acknowledgement of our Tenure, that we hold our selues from God, and therefore we are not at our owne disposing, but must surrender vp our selues vnto God; so that you might as well exclude from nature, a naturall law, as to deny a sacrifice. Thus in generall, all things being ordained to Gods glory, they are likewise ordained for his seruice, here is their sacrifice. More particularly: Nothing in it selfe, contains in it selfe the vse and end of it selfe; but hath some reference beyond it selfe (*E.g.*) Doth not euery thing evaporate, and impart some part of it selfe, suppose the flowers of the field in their sweet smells; many Creatures with their incense and odoriferous perfumes: and what are these indeed but natures sacrifices?

The sacrifice of dumbe Creatures.

Shall we yet come neerer, and shew how they partake in a true sacrifice? What are the stones in the Temple, but indeed offered vp in sacrifice? For it is not necessary, that all should consecrate, who attend at the Altar: all cannot be principals; if the materiall temple will not suffice, come we then to mans body, which is the Temple of Gods Spirit: and surely things ordained for the vse of this Temple, and the vse consisting in their owne slaughter, they are indeed consecrated and become a sacrifice.

Their various and different sacrifices.

If hitherto you dislike the metaphoricall or large signification, come we then to the strictest sence. What were the sacrifices of the Iewes, but indeed the offering vp of dumbe Creatures? Then surely, these dumbe Creatures

The truth of their sacrifices.

28 The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

were no small part in the sacrifice, they cannot be excluded; but these were only types and shadowes of a true Sacrifice; Come we then to that one and only true Sacrifice, the sacrifice of Christ: As we partake in his sacrifice, in regard of our nature, the manhood of Christ, so all the Creatures cannot be excluded in regard of one common matter, or substance, in the body of Christ; so that in him, in him alone, the whole world, the great world in the little world, becomes a true and reall sacrifice.

How the
Creatures
concur in
the Sacra-
ments.

And for Sacraments: Are not all the Creatures sanctified for mans vse? And what is this in effect, but to be the visible signes of inuisible grace? Suppose the foure Elements. The fire, when as God appeared like fire in a bramble-bush, and the Holy descended in fiery tongues; The aire, when as Christ together with his owne breath, breathed out his Spirit: The water, in our baptisme: The earth, in her fruits; Bread and wine in the Eucharist. Thus they share in our Sacraments, according to the capacity of their nature: we actively, they passively, all concur in the Sacraments.

The hope of
the Creatures.

And to proceed yet further: Lest they might seeme to faile in the end, and scope of religion, I say, they are not altogether without hope; for what may they not hope and expect from God, who is so bountifull and magnificent in his rewards? though their seruice be a naturall seruice, a seruice necessarily imposed, and that they can doe no lesse then serue him in their owne kinde, yet it stands with Gods bounty to reward their seruice. I say then, that they are not altogether without hope; for there is a naturall hope, as *Iob* speaks, *Iob 14.7. Lignum si praeisum fuerit, habet spem quod renouetur*: so if I should extend this naturall hope, as an earnest, or as an implicite hope, to a renouation of nature; this were no inconuenience. For certaine it is of all the dumbe Creatures, that at the generall day of our Resurrection, they likewise, though not in themselves, yet in their owne elements and principles, shalbe renewed. For there shall be a new heauen and a
new

new earth, that then they may be fitted for our vse, as now in the time and state of corruption, they serue our present turnes and occasions.

If this seeme a strange doctrine then, let this reason confirme it: Creatures were first created in Paradise. Then surely they were not so much ordained for slaughter, and mans vse, as for the setting forth of Gods glory. Now since our fall, *they groane and trauell in paine together with vs under the burthen of our sinnes, and our miseries, the punishments of sinne, Rom. 8. 22.* yet still they continue innocent in themselves, they are often imployed in Gods seruice, alwaies praying God in their owne kinde, and neuer incurre the breach of his law, but are patient, notwithstanding our immoderate and inordinat abuse. Then surely by a course of iustice, according to their manner, and the capacity of their owne nature, though not in themselves, (that is) in the fiercenesse, malignity and corruption of their nature, yet in their owne first elements and principles, or as they haue now entred into mans body, and are become parts of mans flesh, all the Creatures in generall shall partake with vs, in our future intended renouation.

What becomes of the Creatures after our resurrection.

Thus then we will say with *Ioshuah, 24. 15. I and my house will serue the Lord*: we and whatsoever is ours, either inwardly in our selues, or outwardly in our substance, we are all at his seruice, euery one according to his power and ability doth praise God, and hath his religion, if a defectiue religion. Then looke to the power, and you shall finde it likewise defectiue, for both are fitted and proportioned to each other: in nature, there is a faith of nature, there is a law of nature; and where the naturall creature is capeable of grace, there are the mysteries of grace, the precepts and counsels of grace.

Their religion is according to their power.

And thus without any figure or metaphore, the Creatures may truly be said to praise God, in a kinde of religious worship and seruice; for whatsoever proceeds from God, tends to his glory: heere is the end. Now the way must be agreeable to this end: and therefore what tends

Euery thing must haue a religion.

30 The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

There is a naturall religion.

Proper to beasts, not to man.

A naturall religion hath naturall bounds.

The Metaphysicks.

to his glory, must needs runne in the course of his seruice, whether nature or grace. If ye say, that religion be properly tied to a state of grace; *Non est litigandum de verbis, ubi in re conuenimus*, yet I am not of that opinion, for I thinke it no absurdity to say, a naturall religion. Thus all nations are said to haue their religion, and yet we know, that most of them haue no more then sence, reason, and nature; and yet notwithstanding, they haue a religion: then surely they haue onely a naturall religion, which in effect is no more, then the religion of dumbe beasts, for nature appeares alike in them as in vs: that which giues mans religion a speciall dignity and prerogatiue aboue the religion of dumbe beasts, is onely this, that mans religion is not meere naturall, and onely naturall, but there is an earnest of grace to sanctifie the corruption of nature, mysteries of grace beyond the apprehension of nature, and a certainty of hope beyond the expectation of nature.

And thus in generall, as there is a seruice of nature, so in generall, we may well say that there is a kinde of naturall religion; which notwithstanding proceeding onely from nature, it cannot be raysed aboue nature, but must againe returne and end in nature, and being by the necessity of their nature, it is therefore a seruice which requires no further reward, but onely serues as a motiue and example to vs.

And thus far of the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, which I call the Religion of dumbe Creatures; now briefly to conclude, three things there are wherein I doe much desire to giue you contentment. First, whether this meditation may be thought vaine and needlesse. Secondly, how farre it may seeme strange or a Paradoxe. Thirdly, what good vse may be made of it: for the first, whether this be a vaine meditation, I pray trace it by degrees: the faith of the Creatures, I did suppose to be that knowledge of God, which is gathered from the Creatures, as much in effect, as the naturall or reasonable man can know of God. Now whereas of all sciences, the
Metaphy-

Metaphysicks haue euer beene held the most excellent, this very subiect is the principall part of the Metaphysicks; by consideration hereof, the heathen Philosophers haue beene strangely transported, and rauished, and haue burst forth into these or the like exclamations and inuocations of God: *Ens entium, primus motor, prima intelligentia, naturans natura, immensa infinitas, principium sine principio, &c.*

Secondly, after their faith; how the dumbe Creatures doe praise God in their owne nature, in their passions, in their affections; or if these be secret and hidden from man, then according to the imitation of man, how they praise God in their voyces, in their sounds, which are the outward signes, and symptoms of their owne inward nature. This belongs to the Physickes, and is in effect, the whole scope and intent of all naturall Philosophy.

Naturall Philosophy.

Thirdly, for their law which serues as a guide to direct them; which law is written in their hearts, practised in their actions, in so much that in them, we may easily read the characters of this law, the very pure text of the law of nature without any corrupt glosse: this is in effect the whole ground and foundation of all morall Philosophy.

Morall Philosophy.

Fourthly, for the sacrifice and Sacraments of Creatures, when we consider how the dumbe Creatures are sanctified, and prooue to be *Sacramentalia*, fit to enter into the Holiest of Holies, to be vntoys as meanes and conduits-pipes of grace, which seeme to imply, that nature and grace being now incorporated, there was surely some Deity incarnate, by vertue wherof, the whole materiall nature is combined to the Spirituall nature; not by consanguinity, but by alliance, by the nuptials of those two natures in his one person, who was both perfect God and perfect Man; this is a most deepe and profound myserie in Theology, and thus you cannot condemne this Meditation as vaine and needlesse.

Theology.

Neither can it seeme so strange, or a paradox: for take the bookes of Philosophers, and such as haue written of the

How all sciences may be reduced to this naturall religion.

Crea-

32 The Religion of dumbe Creatures.

Creatures in generall, and suffer me to prefixe these words in the frontispice, *A Ioue principium*, or *In Dei nomine*; which are the same in effect. Then giue me leaue to turne over the leaues, and to the last lines, in stead of *Finis*, or *Explicit*, to adioyne these words, as a labell or codicill to the worke, *Ad Dei gloria*: & both these nature implies: for first there must be a workeman, then the worke must be directed to some end. Now besides the worke it selfe, no other end appeares but the workeman: things must then runne in a circle, from God, to God; God in the forefront, God in the vpshot. And thus if you consider the Creatures, betweene God and God, in stead of a naturall discourse, here you haue a religion of nature.

How this naturall religion and Iudaisme is reduced to Christianity.

Thus in Christian Religion, if our ceremonies were first inuented by Pagans, if our prayers were first composed by Heathen, yet still we may lawfully vse them: for when we prefixe, *In nomine Patris, & Filij, & Spiritus sancti*, or when we shut vp our prayers with *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*, then wee giue them the tincture of Christianity. Thus with *Davids* Psalmes, which are indeed the Psalmes of the Iewes, when we cloze them vp with this period, *Gloria patri & Filio & Spiritui sancto*, then we make them ours, and properly ours; in effect, we Christen them. And thus to consider the Creatures barely in themselves, without reference to God, were a most imperfect knowledge; but shew them their discent and originall, from whence they proceed, shew them their right vse, and the end of their progresse, and here in effect you haue composed a naturall religion.

The Creatures make man ashamed.

Thirdly, for the vse which we may make vnto our selues of this *Religion of dumbe Creatures*, in a word it is this:

First, it serues to make vs ashamed of our selues, that while all other Creatures doe strictly serue God in their owne kinde, yet wee, though more bound vnto God for the many blessings receiued, then they; though more especially intended for Gods seruice, seeing all other Creatures serue man, and man alone is immediatly ordained for Gods

Gods seruice; yet the poore dumbe Creatures should strictly serue God in their owne kinde, while we, and we alone, and we onely are the transgressors.

Secondly, it sets forth the large extent of Gods Church, and the vntouchable height of his glory, though our finnes haue made a separation betweene God and vs, though our blasphemies be such and so great, as that faine they would obscure and eclipse *Gods glory*: yet maugre our attempts, and in despite of our malice, God shall be glorified, as of the Angels aboue, so of the dumbe Creatures beneath: if men shall cease to sing their *Hosannah*, the stones will cry, *Luke 19.40.*

Then in the last place let their seruice be some encouragement and motiue to ours, if we cannot attaine to the perfections of Angels, to offer vp our selues as a whole burnt sacrifice to God; if we cannot approue our selues, as members of one Catholike Church, to serue God in the vnity of one faith, but that as the East hath formerly beene separated from the West, so is now the South from the North, as if with sects and schismes, we were to quarter out religion according to the coasts of the world, and to diuide Christs seamelesse garment among vs, hauing first crucified the Lord of life: If in the course of Christianity, we cannot agree in the very fundamentall points of religion, but are wholly separated, so that neither one mother Church beneath, nor yet one heauen aboue can containe vs. Suppose that Christianity should cease, then let vs come to the tearmes of humanity, and desire to exceed all other Creatures, as well in vertue and dignity, as in nature and condition. But if all faile, if all faile (as I feare they doe in some) then in the last place I pray let me recommend vnto them the religion of dumbe Creatures: surely we can doe no lesse then ioyne with them in their religion: for they are sensuall and beastly, like to our selues: then let not those most excellent attributes of God, which are discovered by them, be contradicted by vs: here we shall auoide Atheisme in our prayers, deuotions, and seruice

The example of Creatures, is an exhortation to vs.

By our nature we are tied to a naturall religion.

34 *The Religion of dumbe Creatures.*

of God, let vs not be inferiour to them.

There is but
one and the
same morall
law to all re-
ligions.

But aboue all, let me recommend this one thing to our practice, that the Creatures may not out-strip vs, in the strict obseruing of the naturall Law, which to vs, in effect, is, in moral honesty. This I doe the rather wish, because the morall law was neuer abrogated, notwithstanding the change of Priest-hood, the change of Ceremonies, the change of Religion, which was translated from the Synagogue of the Iewes, to the Church or congregation of the Gentiles; yet still one and the same morall law was continued. So at this day, notwithstanding our diuersity of Sects, Schismes and Religions; yet it were to be wished, that our actions might be squared out by one morall law, which law appeares in the Creatures, and is common to man and the Creatures; and is as naturall to man, as is his owne nature, and should no more be separated from man, then his owne nature: for want then of religious piety and godlinesse, let this morall law be our guide. Thus man shall know his dutie to man.

No differen-
ces in religion
should take
away morall
duties.

But how miserable were our condition? what a world of mischief would follow? if we should neglect morall duties, vnder cloake and pretence of religion, as if religion did abolish nature, as if the morall law were abrogated together with the ceremoniall; Yet this is the practice and iniquity of these our most vnhappy times, that all factions, seditions and trecheries must be forsooth rooted and grounded in religion, as if religion were the sole mother, and nurse of all treasons; as if heauen could not subsist with the earth; as if the Tower of Babel could not be built, but with Church stones. This is the bane and the shame of Religion. God knowes, I cannot speake of it with patience, or without my great hearts grieve: and therefore I will here end abruptly; beseeching the Almighty God to reforme it; beseeching the Almighty God reforme it.

5 MA 69.
*Sanctæ & indiuiduæ Trinitati sit
honor & gloria.*

Some faults haue escaped the Presse, *either* in omitting letters, as page 4. line 21. for awake read awaken ; *or* omitting words, as p. 35. l. 17. this word *Sanctus* should be thrice repeated, as implying a mystery: *or* mistaking some words, as pag. 22. lin. 17. for apparitions, read operations, yet the faults are such and so few, as that thou thy selfe maist easily correct them.

(E.g.) signifies *exempli gratia*, as foreexample.
